

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 A-11 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 FMC-04

CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-06 IO-14 SCI-06 FEA-02 INT-08

TRSE-00 DRC-01 /186 W

----- 038820

R 211913Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7267

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USINT CAIRO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, UK, XF, ETRD

SUBJECT: FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE AND THE ILA INITIATIVE -
ITF FAIR PRACTICES MEETING JAN. 17-18

REF: STATE 011621 AND LONDON 630

1. SUMMARY: THE MAJOR ACTION OF THE ITF FAIR PRACTICES

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COMMITTEE MEETING JAN. 17-18 RELATED TO THE EFFORTS OF

HONG KONG SHIP OWNERS TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE SHIPPING REGISTRY. AS FOR THE ILA INITIATIVE CALLING FOR A BOYCOTT OF ARAB SHIPPING, IT WAS GIVEN SYMPATHETIC HEARING BUT NO DECISIVE ACTION WAS TAKEN BY THE ITF IN REGARD TO IT. END SUMMARY

2. HAROLD LEWIS, ITF ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY, INFORMED US THAT THE MAJOR CONCERN OF THE ITF FAIR PRACTICES COMMITTEE AT THIS MEETING WAS THE INCREASED INTEREST OF THE HONG KONG SHIPPING INDUSTRY IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEPARATE HONG KONG SHIPPING REGISTER THAN THE BRITISH REGISTER WHICH IS NOW IN EFFECT. THE HONG KONG SHIP OWNERS, LEWIS SAID, HAVE BEEN WORKING TOWARDS SUCH A SEPARATE REGISTER FOR TWO YEARS AND THEIR PROPOSAL HAS RECENTLY BEEN GAINING GREATER SUPPORT WITHIN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT.

3. THE ITF COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT THE ITF SHOULD INTENSIFY ITS OPPOSITION TO THE ACT AND THAT ITF AFFILIATES SHOULD STRONGLY URGE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT ITS ENACTMENT. LEWIS EMPHASIZED THAT IF A SEPARATE REGISTER IS ESTABLISHED, IT WILL LEAD TO A LOWERING OF GENERAL SHIPPING STANDARDS AND TO THE POSSIBLE USE OF HONG KONG SHIPS UNDER "FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE."

4. LEWIS SAID THE ITF COMMITTEE (WHICH MEETS ANNUALLY) ALSO REVIEWED THE ITF CAMPAIGN TO LIMIT OR RESTRICT "FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE" SHIPPING. HE ADDED THAT THE COMMITTEE EXPRESSED PLEASURE OVER THE RESULTS OF THE ITF CAMPAIGN IN AUSTRALIA AND ISRAEL (WHERE AFFILIATES BROUGHT PRESSURE ON "FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE" SHIPS TO SIGN WITH THE UNION) AND HAVE HOPES FOR SIMILAR SUCCESSES IN NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY, DENMARK, SWEDEN AND FINLAND.

5. LEWIS ALSO SAID THAT EXCEPT FOR "A BIT OF EXCITEMENT" GENERATED BY THE ILA INITIATIVE FOR A BOYCOTT OF ARAB GOODS, THE MEETING WAS RATHER "MUNDANE." THE COMMITTEE DID AGREE, HE TO A STATEMENT NOTING THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PARTICIPANTS HAD DISCUSSED THE CURRENT ENERGY CRISIS AND HAD RECEIVED A REPORT FROM TED GLEASON, ILA

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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LEADER, ON CERTAIN STEPS (A BOYCOTT OF ARAB GOODS)
WHICH THE AMERICAN MARITIME UNIONS CONTEMPLATE IN
RETALIATION AGAINST THE ARAB OIL EMBARGO. THE
COMMITTEE AGREED "THAT THE SITUATION DEMANDS CLOSE AND
CONTINUOUS ATTENTION BY THE EXECUTIVE OF THE ITF,
PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE GRAVE EFFECTS ON
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WORKER STANDARDS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES." IT INSTRUCTED THE ITF GENERAL SECRETARY TO "BRING THE FEELINGS EXPRESSED BY THE COMMITTEE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD."

6. LEWIS SAID THAT WHILE "NOBODY LIKES TO BE SQUEEZED" BY THE ARAB BOYCOTT HE VIEWED THE PROPOSAL IN EFFECT, AS A "NON-STARTER." NO ONE ACCEPTED A BOYCOTT OF ARAB GOODS, HE NOTED, ALTHOUGH THE PARTICIPANTS WERE SYMPATHETIC TO GLEASON IN GENERAL TERMS. MOREOVER, HE POINTED OUT, NO SPECIFIC AND PARTICULAR ACTION WAS CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE IN ITS STATEMENT TO THE ITF EXECUTIVE BOARD.

7. GLEASON TOLD US HE WAS RATHER SATISFIED, HOWEVER, WITH THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING. HE BELIEVES THAT FOLLOWING HIS EXPLANATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE ILA INITIATIVE (WHICH HE SAID WAS SUPPORTED BY ALL OF THE AFL-CIO MARITIME UNIONS REPRESENTED AT THE MEETING), THE PARTICIPANTS HAD A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION.

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Message Attributes

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